

Revitalizing Florida's Economy

During this year's Legislative Session, we stayed focused on our responsibility to Florida's families and businesses. Every decision we made was viewed through the lens of revitalizing Florida's economy and helping create jobs for Floridians.

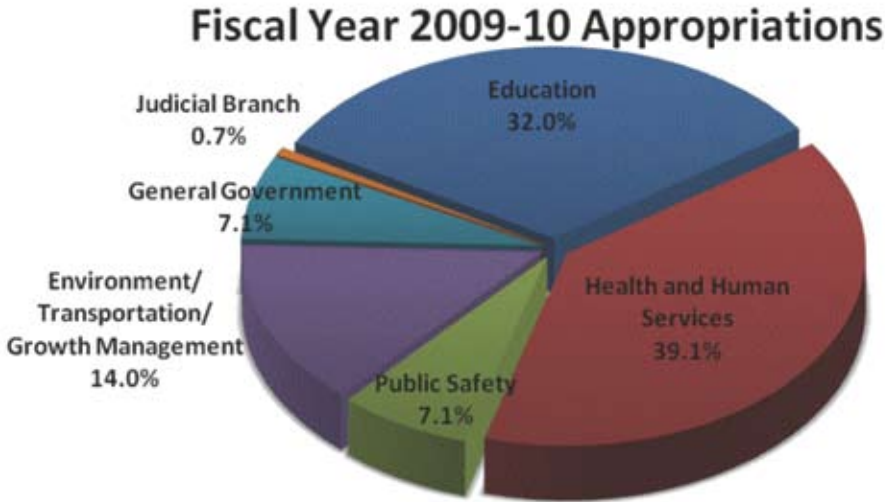
This year, we continued forward with reforming Florida's workers' compensation system to prevent job losses and promote job creation. We worked to help create jobs and increase economic development by expediting permitting processes and fast tracking construction projects identified by local governments as a target industry business.

We also created economic incentives to encourage business growth across the state. We passed Fast Track Stimulus for Small Businesses legislation that provides state tax credits for investments in low-income

communities. The program is designed to make the state more attractive to national investors who are deciding where to invest funds raised under the Federal New Markets Tax Credits program. Our budget also provided \$13.5 million in the Quick Action Closing Fund to attract new companies to Florida and increased funding for Film and Entertainment Incentives to attract more film and entertainment jobs to Florida.

We know that the real estate market will provide important fuel for Florida's economic recovery. Our budget helps Florida's families directly by providing \$30 million for first-time homebuyer assistance.

I believe these are important steps towards recharging Florida's economy. Economic development is my highest priority, and I will continue to work to ensure Florida's economy gets back on track.



Policy Areas	Appropriations*
Education	\$21.273
Health and Human Services	\$26.043
Public Safety	\$4.755
Environment/Transportation/Growth Management	\$9.294
General Government	\$4.720
Judicial	\$.451
Total State	\$66.54 Billion

*In billions.

Steve Crisafulli

STATE REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 32

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COMMITTEES

- Agriculture & Natural Resources Policy Committee
- Economic Development Policy Committee
- Elder & Family Services Policy Committee
- Joint Committee on Public Counsel Oversight
- Natural Resources Appropriations Committee

Legislative Assistant: Ryan Smith
District Secretary: Helen Franta



Steve Crisafulli

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 32

CAPITOL UPDATE

STEVE CRISAFULLI

STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 32

Dear Friends,
The Florida Legislature recently concluded its 2009 Legislative Session. As your State Representative, I wanted to update you on the work the Legislature accomplished this year.

As you may know, Florida encountered the worst budget crisis in its history. Grappling with a \$6 billion budget deficit dominated this year's Session. I believe we took a fiscally responsible approach to meet our constitutional obligation to pass a balanced budget by looking for wasteful spending to eliminate and by prioritizing spending to focus on our state's core missions – education, healthcare and public safety.

Equally as important to balancing the budget, we always looked for ways to jumpstart our state's economy. As a small businessman, I am keenly aware of how families and businesses are struggling right now and how important it is to get Floridians back to work.

As a freshman legislator, I tried to bring a fresh perspective to Tallahassee to tackle our state's problems. I hope you will find this Legislative Update to be both informative and useful. Please contact me at Steve.Crisafulli@MyFloridaHouse.gov, or call my district office at (321) 449-5111 if you require assistance or have any questions or concerns. I have an open door policy and also welcome you to visit our district office.

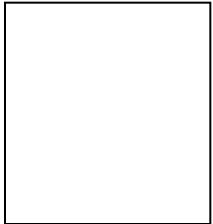
Sincerely,

Steve Crisafulli
State Representative, District 32

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Protecting Education

Before the Legislative Session began, many of us worried about providing adequate funding for public education. As the father of two children in public schools, providing our children with a quality education is an important priority for me.

In spite of the difficult budget times facing Florida and the nation, the Legislature protected classroom funding by actually increasing per-student funding to a statewide average of \$6,873. We also gave school boards flexibility in spending to help local communities address local needs.

Moreover, we know it is not only how much we spend on education that matters; how we spend it matters, too. By raising standards and demanding accountability, student achievement results are improving significantly.

Since 2001, there has been an across-the-board positive trend in student performance in Florida. Each year, more of our students are performing at grade level and mastering the skills that will enable them to succeed. We are seeing improvements in FCAT scores, national

comparisons of reading and math scores, graduation rates, and minority student performance. In fact, *Education Week* ranked Florida's education system tenth in the nation in January 2009.

These rising student achievement results illustrate that Florida should continue on its path of accountability and increased academic expectations for students.



Reforming Property Taxes



Working towards reforming our state's broken property tax system is very important to me. This Session, I co-sponsored several pieces of legislation aimed at providing additional property tax relief for Floridians.

We restored balance and fairness to the property appraisal process and leveled the playing field between homeowners and property appraisers. If you disagree with your property appraiser's assessment, the appraiser will now have to justify the assessment. Previously, you had to prove it was incorrect.

We also passed a ballot measure for November 2010 that will provide voters with the opportunity to limit the property tax increases on non-homestead property and provide first-time homestead property owners an additional exemption.

Moreover, we brought relief to over 25,000 Floridians who are active duty military personnel deployed overseas. To show our gratitude to our brave men and women serving in harm's way, voters will have the opportunity to provide a credit against future ad valorem taxes owed on property for deployed members of the United States military or military reserves, the United States Coast Guard or its reserves, or the Florida National Guard.

I believe that property tax reform is critical for stimulating our economy. I feel strongly that we can speed up our economic recovery by providing needed tax relief for many of Florida's families and businesses.

Sponsored Legislation

I am proud that two bills which I authored were adopted by the Florida Legislature during this Session. In addition, the core of another bill I authored was included in the state budget. My legislation sought to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our state government, which I believe will ultimately save money and foster economic development.

House Bill 641: The Accurate Employment Statistics Enhancement Act (passed)

House Bill 641 will provide the federal government, the State of Florida, state agencies, businesses, and research entities more accurate employment statistics from professional employee leasing organizations which employ 8% of Florida's workers. Without accurate employment statistics, millions of federal and state dollars for job training programs are potentially misallocated and it is more difficult for policymakers to make accurate decisions regarding economic development. As a result of this legislation, the state government will now be able to ensure that job training dollars and economic development projects are focused where they are needed most.

House Bill 1459: State Construction Contracting Management (passed)

This bill allows state government the option of procuring construction management services using the qualifications-based selection process for projects under \$2 million. The effects when utilized will result in increased efficiencies in construction start times and decreased administrative costs and red tape for the state.

House Bill 499: State Universities (included in the state budget)

Though this legislation was not passed as a bill, its substance was included in the state budget enacted by the Legislature. This language allows state universities to more efficiently utilize private money to start needed building projects. Importantly, it does not create a state financial obligation to match private funds. Because of the passage of this provision, important economic development projects, such as the University of Central Florida's new medical school in Lake Nona, will be aided.



Space Legislation

I am honored that the Kennedy Space Center is located in our district. Ensuring the continuation of the space program is critical to not just this district, but to our state, and our nation, as well. Thousands of Floridians depend on the space

industry for jobs, and mitigating the devastating impacts of the space shuttle's retirement next year is vital to our families, businesses and economy. The Florida House formally recognized these facts through the passage of House Resolution 9119, which I sponsored.

In addition, I sponsored House Bill 307 to create a program in which the Legislature could provide financial incentives for specific commercial space projects completed in Florida. Unfortunately, no space legislation passed during this year's Session, but I will continue to work towards enacting legislation that promotes the viability of our state's space industry.

Making State Government More Efficient

Florida has 10 forecasting committees covering specific areas, such as Florida's population, revenue, school enrollment etc. Their forecasts have major impacts on the work the Legislature does. This Session, I introduced House Bill 447 which would require a cost-benefit analysis be included when the forecasting committees meet to consider special impacts to their work. In the business world, proposals are weighed based on their costs and benefits, and I think we should be doing the same thing in Tallahassee. Though the legislation did not pass this Session, it will be one of my top priorities again next year.

Helpful Websites

Florida Discount Drug Card – www.floridadiscountdrugcard.com
Health Insurance for Children – www.floridakidcare.org
Affordable Health Insurance – www.coverfloridahealthcare.com
Health Care Information – www.floridahealthfinder.gov

College Scholarships – www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org
Prepaid College Tuition – www.myfloridaprepaid.com
School Grades – schoolgrades.fldoe.org
Scholarships for Students – www.scholarshipfunding.org

Information on licensed professionals – www.myfloridalicense.com
Information on Healthcare Professionals – www2.doh.state.fl.us/IRM00profiling/searchform.ASP
Sexual Predator search (by neighborhood) – offender.fdle.state.fl.us/offender/Search.jsp
Criminal History Searches – https://www2.fdle.state.fl.us/cchinet

Employment Information – www.employflorida.com
Public Assistance Benefits – www.myflorida.com/accessflorida
Veterans Information – www.floridavets.org
Elder Affairs – www.elderaffairs.state.fl.us

Hurricane Preparedness – www.floridadisaster.org/family
Volunteerism – www.volunteerflorida.org